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15. (Amended) A method for manufacturing an image displaying medium comprising:

first, providing plural colorant particles on one or both of a first flat substrate and a second flat substrate, which have such shapes that the first substrate and the second substrate are mated with each other; and

second, making the first substrate and the second flat substrate to fix the first substrate and the second substrate.

Please add new claims 16-19 as follows:

- 16. The method of claim 1, wherein no liquid is provided between the first substrate and the second substrate.--
- 17. The method of claim 3, wherein no liquid is provided between the first substrate and the second substrate.--
- 18. The method of claim 5, wherein no liquid is provided between the first substrate and the second substrate.--
- 19. The method of claim 15, wherein no liquid is provided between the first substrate and the second substrate.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending. By this Amendment claims 1, 3, 5 and 15 and the specification are amended, and claims 16-19 are added.

The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of each rewritten paragraph (37 C.F.R. §1.121(b)(1)(iii)) and claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

Applicants wish to express their appreciation to Examiners Ton and Duong for the courtesies extend to Applicants' representatives at the February 11, 2003 personal interview. The points discussed at the interview are incorporated into the remarks below.

Item 3 of the Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 6, 7 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 3,870,517 to Ota et al. (hereinafter "Ota"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Item 3 alleges that Ota discloses a method for manufacturing an image display medium comprising: providing plural colorant particles on at least one of a first flat substrate and a second flat substrate, providing a spacer member to maintain a distance between the two substrates, and arranging the colorant particles in the spacer member between the first substrate and the second substrate by fixing the spacer member, the first substrate and the second substrate. However, Ota does not disclose a feature that is implicit in claim 1, namely that the colorant particles are provided on at least one of a first flat substrate and a second flat substrate before the first and second substrates are fixed. In Ota, the particles are introduced in a suspension medium after the substrates are fixed.

In order to make explicit this implied feature of the claims, that the colorant particles are provided on at least one of a first flat substrate and a second substrate before the first and second substrates are fixed, claims 1, 3, 5 and 15 have been amended to expressly recite the order of the steps.

Additionally, Ota describes colorant particles that are suspended within a suspending media, which is either a liquid (col. 7, lines 20-23; col. 8, lines 47-53; col. 10, lines 53-61) or a softenable solid (col. 10, lines 17-19; col. 10, lines 34-36). It is clear from the specification and the figures of Ota that the suspension layer of the color image reproduction sheet is filled entirely with suspending media and particles.

Finally, Ota teaches away from a display medium without a liquid suspending media, because when the liquid suspension layer is removed (and thereby replaced with air) from the image sheet in Ota, the sheet will no longer be operable and will contain a permanent image (col. 10, lines 53-66). Claims 16-19 have been added to identify this difference.

Because Ota does not describe a method for manufacturing an image displaying medium comprising: first, providing plural colorant particles on at least one of a first flat substrate and a side of a second substrate on which a spacer is provided to maintain a distance to the first substrate upon superimposing on the first substrate; and second, fixing the first substrate and the spacer on the second substrate to arrange the colorant particles between the first substrate and the second substrate, Ota cannot teach or disclose all of the features of claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13 and 15. It is respectfully requested that the rejection is withdrawn.

Item 5 of the Office Action rejects claims 5 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ota in view of U.S. Patent 5,558,977 to DePalma et al. (hereinafter "DePalma"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Again, in order to make explicit the implicit feature of claim 5, that colorant particles are provided on at least one of a first flat substrate and a second substrate before the first and second substrates are fixed, claim 5 has been amended. Conversely, neither Ota nor DePalma teach, describe or suggest a method for manufacturing an image display medium comprising: first, providing plural colorant particles on at least one of a first flat substrate and a side of a second substrate on which a spacer is provided to maintain a distance to the first substrate upon superimposing on the first substrate; and second, fixing the first substrate and the spacer on the second substrate to arrange the colorant particles between the first substrate and the second substrate. Because neither reference contains this feature, claim 5 and claim 8, dependent on claim 5, cannot be obvious in light of the combination of Ota and DePalma. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection is withdrawn.

Item 6 of the Office Action rejects claims 9, 10, 12, and 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ota in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,392,786 B1 to Albert (hereinafter "Albert"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Again, because neither Ota nor Albert teach, describe or suggest a method for manufacturing an image display medium comprising colorant particles provided on at least one of a first flat substrate and a second substrate before the first and second substrates are fixed as claimed in claims 1 and 3, those claims cannot be obvious in light of the combination of the references. As a result, claims 9 and 12, dependent on claim 1, and claims 10 and 13, dependent on claim 3 cannot be obvious either. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection is withdrawn.

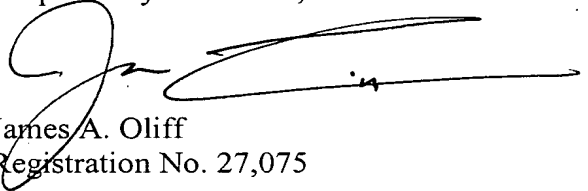
Item 7 of the Office Action rejects claims 11 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ota in view of DePalma above and further in view of Albert. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As previously argued herein, neither Ota, DePalma nor Albert claim or describe providing the colorant particles on at least one of a first flat substrate on a second flat substrate before fixing the first substrate and the second substrate. Because none of these references describe such a feature, the combination of the references cannot support a 35 U.S.C. §103(a) *prima facie* case of obviousness against claim 5, or claims 11 and 14, dependent on claim 5. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-19 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:JOC/sdb

Attachments:

Appendix
Letter to the Official Draftsperson
Request for Approval of Drawing Corrections

Date: March 3, 2003

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APPENDIX

Changes to Specification:

Page 8, lines 6-9:

The fixing layer is a layer of a thermoplastic resin, which is plasticized by heating. The spacer particles can be fixed on the second particles by plasticizing the fixing layer by heating, and then cooling. According to the method, the substrate having the spacer can be ~~manufactured~~ manufactured by a simple process at a low cost.

Page 9, line 19 - page 10, line 4:

Furthermore, it is also possible that a mask having an opening having a desired pattern is placed on the substrate, and after supplying the spacer particles, the mask is removed to provide the particles on the substrate in the desired pattern. In such a method, the particles ~~is~~ are supplied, by a screen printing method, a blade coating method, a roller coating method, a spray coating method, ~~a blade coating method, a roller coating method, a spray coating method,~~ a gap coating method, a bar coating method or a particle sedimentation method, to the substrate, on which the mask is placed, and then the mask is removed, whereby the spacer particles can be coated on the substrate, on which the mask having a desired pattern is placed, and can be fixed on the substrate by the fixing force of the fixing layer formed on the surface of the spacer particles. As the fixing layer on the spacer particles, those for the substrate can also be applied.

Page 36, lines 4-7:

Furthermore, the colorant particles 103 ~~is~~ are fluidized by previously applying an AC voltage between electrodes provided above and under the particles to unravel the colorant particles 103 that ~~is~~ are solidified and unmovable, so as to form a good coating condition of the colorant particles 103 excellent in uniformity and mobility.

Page 38, lines 9-15:

~~The~~Then, the colorant particles 103 are placed on the screen mesh by a dry screen coating device ~~18-118~~ and smoothened by a blade 18, so as to uniformly coat the colorant particles. Thereafter, the mask 116 is removed by a mask removing device not shown in the figure, and after placing a spacer member 120 having an epoxy series adhesive coated on both surfaces, the second flat substrate is superimposed and adhered. The other constitutional components of the twelfth embodiment are the same as those in the tenth embodiment, and thus the description thereof is omitted.

Changes to Claims:

Claims 16-19 are added.

The following is a marked-up version of the amended claims:

1. (Amended) A method for manufacturing an image displaying medium comprising ~~the steps of~~:
 - first, providing plural colorant particles on at least one of a first flat substrate and a side of a second substrate on which a spacer is provided to maintain a distance to the first substrate upon superimposing on the first substrate; and
 - second, fixing the first substrate and the spacer on the second substrate to arrange the colorant particles between the first substrate and the second substrate.
3. (Amended) A method for manufacturing an image displaying medium comprising ~~the steps of~~:
 - first, providing plural colorant particles on one or both of a first flat substrate and a second flat substrate and providing a spacer member on one of the first substrate and the second substrate; and

second, arranging the colorant particles and the spacer member between the first substrate and the second substrate by fixing the spacer member, the first substrate and the second substrate.

5. (Amended) A method for manufacturing an image displaying medium comprising ~~the steps of~~:

first, providing plural colorant particles on one or both of a first flat substrate and a second flat substrate while masking one of the first substrate and the second substrate;

second, after removing the mask, providing a spacer member on one of the first substrate and the second substrate; and

third, fixing the spacer member, the first substrate and the second substrate so that the colorant particles and the spacer member are arranged between the first substrate and the second substrate.

15. (Amended) A method for manufacturing an image displaying medium comprising ~~the steps of~~:

first, providing plural colorant particles on one or both of a first flat substrate and a second flat substrate, which have such shapes that the first substrate and the second substrate are mated with each other; and

second, making the first substrate and the second flat substrate to fix the first substrate and the second substrate.